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In re Application of
Andreas Wachtler et al
Application No. 09/964,650
Filed: September 28, 2001
Attorney Docket No. MERCK-1497 (C3)

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:
: **OFFICE OF PETITIONS**
: **DECISION ON PETITION**
: **UNDER 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3)**
:

This is a decision on the petition under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3), filed June 11, 2003, and supplemented on March 16, 2004, to accept an unintentionally delayed claim under 35 U.S.C. § 120 for the benefit of priority to the prior-filed nonprovisional applications set forth in the amendment filed March 16, 2004.

The petition is **GRANTED**.

A petition for acceptance of a claim for late priority under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) is only applicable to those applications filed on or after November 29, 2000. Further, the petition is appropriate only after the expiration of the period specified in 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(ii). In addition, the petition under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) must be accompanied by:

- (1) the reference required by 35 U.S.C. § 120 and 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(i) of the prior-filed application, unless previously submitted;¹
- (2) the surcharge set forth in § 1.17(t); and
- (3) a statement that the entire delay between the date the claim was due under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(ii) and the date the claim was filed was unintentional. The Commissioner may require additional information where there is a question whether the delay was unintentional.

¹ Any nonprovisional application or international application designating the United States of America claiming the benefit of one or more prior-filed copending applications or international applications designating the United States of America must contain or be amended to contain a reference (amendment to the first line of the specification following the title or in an application data sheet (ADS) to each such prior-filed application, identifying it by application number (consisting of the series code and serial number) or international application number and international filing date filing date and indicating the relationship of the applications. Cross references to other related applications may be made when appropriate (see § 1.14).

The instant pending application was filed on September 28, 2001, and was pending at the time of filing of the instant petition. A reference to the prior-filed nonprovisional applications has been included in an amendment to the first sentence of the specification following the title, as required by 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(iii).

The instant nonprovisional application was filed after November 29, 2000, and the claim herein for the benefit of priority to the prior-filed nonprovisional applications is submitted after expiration of the period specified in 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(ii). Also, the reference to the prior-filed nonprovisional applications was submitted during the pendency of the instant nonprovisional application, for which the claim for benefit of priority is sought. See 35 U.S.C. § 120. Accordingly, having found that the instant petition for acceptance of an unintentionally delayed claim for the benefit of priority under 35 U.S.C. § 120 to the prior-filed nonprovisional applications satisfies the conditions of 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3), the petition is granted.

The granting of the petition to accept the delayed benefit claim to the prior-filed applications under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(3) should not be construed as meaning that the instant application is entitled to the benefit of the prior-filed applications. In order for the instant application to be entitled to the benefit of the prior-filed applications, all other requirements under 35 U.S.C. § 120 and 37 CFR 1.78(a)(1) and (a)(2) must be met. Similarly, the fact that the corrected Filing Receipt accompanying this decision on petition includes the prior-filed applications should not be construed as meaning that applicant is entitled to the claim for benefit of priority to the prior-filed applications noted thereon. Accordingly, the examiner will, in due course, consider this benefit claim and determine whether the instant application is entitled to the benefit of the earlier filing date.

A corrected Filing Receipt, which includes the priority claim to the prior-filed nonprovisional applications, accompanies this decision on petition.

Any inquiries concerning this decision may be directed to Karen Creasy at (703) 305-8859.

This application is being forwarded to Technology Center Art Unit 1756 for consideration by the examiner of applicant's entitlement to claim benefit of priority under 35 U.S.C. § 120 to the prior-filed nonprovisional applications and to reply to the papers filed August 7, 2003 and October 6, 2003.



Karen Creasy
Petitions Examiner
Office of Petitions
Office of the Deputy Commissioner
for Patent Examination Policy

ATTACHMENT: Corrected Filing Receipt